

Message Text

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17

ORIGIN NEA-09

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MUJIB'S STOPOVER IN NEW YORK CITY

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MUJIB, ACCCOMPANIED BY AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION, STOPPED OVER AT JFK FOR 1-1/2 HOURS ON SUNDAY, APRIL 27, ON HIS WAY TO THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE. PRESIDENT MUJIB RECEIVED AN ORAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD, WHOSE GREETINGS WERE WARMLY RETURNED. BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER HOSSAIN SPOKE HIGHLY OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO DACCA LAST OCTOBER AND EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO BANGLADESH BY THE USG. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING HIS 1-1/2 HOUR STOPOVER AT JFK, THE FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT FORD WAS RELAYED TO PRESIDENT MUJIB: QTE I WANT TO TAKE THIS OCCASION TO GREET YOU ONCE AGAIN IN THE UNITED STATES. I RECALL WITH PLEASURE OUR PERSONAL
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MEETING IN WASHINGTON LAST OCTOBER AND ASSURE YOU OF THE CONTINUING INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE PEACE AND WELL-BEING OF BANGLADESH AND THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOUR

CURRENT TRIP WILL BE A REWARDING ONE FOR YOU. WITH BEST WISHES FOR YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH. SINCERELY, GERALD R. FORD. END QTE.

3. PRESIDENT MUJIB EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE MESSAGE TO DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS AND ASKED THAT WARM REGARDS BE CONVEYED TO THE PRESIDENT. BOTH PRESIDENT MUJIB AND FOREIGN MINISTER HOSSAIN EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO DACC A IN OCTOBER AND FOR THE ASSISTANCE BEING PROVIDED TO BANGLADESH BY THE USG.

4. IN A DISCUSSION WITH DUBS, THE PRESIDENT SEEMED PREOCCUPIED WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BANGLADESH. HE PLACED SPECIAL STRESS ON EFFORTS BEING MADE IN BANGLADESH TO DEVELOP FARM COOPERATIVES. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN BANGLADESH WAS SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE INABILITY OF MANY FARMERS TO DO ANY WORK ON THEIR LAND FOR APPROXIMATELY 4-5 MONTHS OF THE YEAR. BECAUSE OF THE MONSOON RAINS. HE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD HAD A DIFFICULT TIME ORGANIZING ITSELF SINCE ITS INDEPENDENCE BUT THAT HE NOW PERSONALLY FELT THAT HE HAD THE SITUATION IN HAND AND HAD SOME FEELING FOR WHERE THE COUNTRY SHOULD GO. PRESIDENT MUJIB REGRETTED THAT PAKISTAN'S ONE 707 WAS TEMPORARILY OUT OF COMMISSION WHEN HE DEPARTED DACCA AND THAT HE WAS THEREFORE REQUIRED TO FLY TO JAMAICA VIA FOREIGN COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS. DURING THE CONVERSATION, HE ASKED HIS SECRETARY OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION, SYEDUZZAMAN, TO APPROACH THE EXIM BANK FOR A LOAN FOR TWO ADDITIONAL 707S. SYEDUZZAMAN SPOKE HIGHLY OF THE 707 MODEL 333 SERIES.

5. FOREIGN MINISTER HOSSAIN REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO BANGLADESH. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH WAS ESPECIALLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN PROMOTING A NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH.
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HOSSAIN ADDED THAT THE BENGALIS WERE PREPARED TO MEET WITH THE PAKISTANIS TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS AT ANY TIME AND WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES, HE ADDED, REVOLVED PRETTY MUCH AROUND THE DIVISION OF ASSETS AND THE RESETTLEMENT IN PAKISTAN OF SOME 63,000 BIHARI FAMILIES. HOSSAIN SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SOME GESTURE FROM BHUTTO REGARDING THE DIVISION OF ASSETS. HE NOTED IN THIS CONTEXT THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN HAD JUST SOLD TWO 707S TO THE YUGOSLAVS AND SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A NICE GESTURE ON THE PART OF ISLAMABAD TO PRESENT THESE AIRCRAFT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH.

6. PRESIDENT MUJIB, FOREIGN MINISTER HOSSAIN AND SECRETARY
OF PLANNING COMMISSION SYEDUZZAMAN ALL SPOKE HIGHLY OF THE
WORK OF AMBASSADOR BOSTER AND THE U.S. MISSION IN DACCA. KISSINGER

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